

# Architecture and Resistance: of empowerment and ecological thinking

Elective Seminar

Professor Sarosh Anklesaria



*Image: Circuit Boards, Chris Jordan*

*Architecture and Resistance: of empowerment and ecological thinking* addresses the deepening social inequity and ecological anxiety of our time through critical surveys of the relationships between concepts of 'nature' and the built environment across various scales and geographies. It examines and critiques the flows of information, knowledge and 'models of development', from developed to less developed contexts. It considers local, subaltern modes of thinking, action and change. It eschews default neoliberal tropes of 'Green Architectures', 'Smart Cities' or LEED or BREAMM driven techno-utopias, and instead asks architecture and architects to participate in a fundamental inquiry about the human condition - our relationship to non-human agents and question basic assumptions about the way we inhabit and cohabit the planet.

Students will develop a foundational understanding of key concepts of contemporary relevance that frame the relationships between architecture, society and ecology. This will be done

through a discursive reading of texts related to anthropocentrism, neoliberalism, climate justice, humanitarian design, regenerative infrastructures, temporality, incrementalism, deep ecology, dark ecology, synanthropism, degrowth, ecofeminism and planetarity. Concurrently students will understand the implications of such forms of thinking on the built environment through case studies of relevant projects and practices. Students will learn to develop new critical lenses of inquiry that problematize architecture and the built environment as an entangled construct of complex social and ecological constructs, that operate across scales and geographies.

Students will undertake two broad inquiries through reading, research and analysis: The first entails concepts, themes, manifestos and principles that implicate labor, ecology, nature, and architecture - the theorization of these through modern and contemporary lenses and secondly, comparative readings of buildings each week that speculate upon, critique or contradict these theorizations. The second considers practices or projects that critique or speculate upon the former. What are the means and methods, tactics, strategies, manifestos and actions through which architects resist, upend, destabilize, and reinvent normative mechanisms of architectural production? The practices and projects will seek new, radical ways of reinventing, distorting or hacking the brief, site, program, construct, tectonics and/or notions of ownership.

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